

FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

Published monthly September through June by the Foggy Bottom Restoration Association

Volume 1

April 1958

Number 3

A VERY SPECIAL MEETING....

Come see
a movie about a

By Herbert Socks, President
Foggy Bottom Restoration Association
Art by Shirley Kennard

On Monday evening, April 14, at 8:30, the Foggy Bottom Restoration Association will have a program that none should miss!

From ACTION, American Council To Improve Our Neighborhoods, we have obtained a copy of the film "MAN OF ACTION." It is a full-color, animated, sound film, designed to stimulate all levels of the community to home, neighborhood, and community development.

Its fact-based narrative is told with humor and drama. It reveals how apathy lets slums and blight develop, and how John Q. Public, seeing his own home threatened by these conditions, organizes his community to eliminate slums and improve living standards for all.

This 15-minute film is not only fascinating entertainment--it will hold the interest of anyone who has faith in the future of Foggy Bottom. This is an event not to be missed and we hope you will attend, and bring all your friends and neighbors. This will be truly a special event for everyone in the Bottom.

The American Council To Improve Our Neighborhoods is a national, non-profit public service organization. It is dedicated to the elimination of slum conditions and the improvement of America's homes, neighborhoods, and communities. It works with national organizations, local citizen groups, and interested citizens and public officials to develop effective local action for realizing these goals.

Place: Briggs-Montgomery School, 27th St.

...and how he helped
his community !!!!



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FAST DELIVERY

COLONEL MATHE WILL SPEAK

In addition to the film described on page 1, we shall have an excellent speaker -- Lt. Col. Robert A. Mathe, assistant Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia. Colonel Mathe has been one of the best friends Foggy Bottom has had in the District building, helping personally, advising and promoting our interests. He headed up the Urban Renewal Program, and it is this subject that he will discuss at our meeting, giving particular attention to aspects of it that may benefit the Bottom.

BORN A SHOEMAKER

One Foggy Bottom character who has stuck to his last is Frank LoMedico, who was born on the very spot where he has his shoeshop, 2506 Pennsylvania. This Frank disclosed to us when we talked to him about one thing and another on a recent Saturday morning stroll in the neighborhood.

"Born right on this spot," Frank fairly exploded, defying us to disbelieve him. And laying down an ugly looking shoemaker's knife while fixing us with unsmiling eyes, he indicated a spot on the counter by pressing the tip of an index finger on it. "Right here I was born, believe it or not," he gave us to understand, "on December 29, 1907."

Frank's father and mother, both Sicilians, established their home at the Pennsylvania Avenue address, and Papa LoMedico set up a cobbler's shop there, soon after the family emigrated to the United States around the turn of the century. And by the way, the Capital M belongs there in the family name, just as we have written it.

Frank fought his way through two schools--Corcoran and Grant--before he was graduated from Western High. According to Frank, you had to fight, otherwise you didn't finish.

Business is better now than it was before the present restoration of Foggy Bottom started, Frank told us as he wrapped up a couple of pairs of shoes that he had expertly repaired for us. He has prospered through the years and owns not only the building in which his shop is located but other property

nearby as well. His father died in 1950. The LoMedicos have two children--Katherine, 17, and little Jamie, 5. They live in Arlington and belong to St. Agnes parish out there.

To A Litterbug
By Shirley

I've scrubbed and swept
And shined and dusted
Polished and washed
Till my back is busted.

The weeds are pulled,
The door knocker gleams,
The pickets are painted,
Each window beams.

I'm going to bed
Feeling proud and happy
For my family will find
My home neat and snappy!

On the welcome morn
I fling open the door
To greet my guests
OH NEVERMORE!

A beer can, a bottle,
A cigarette pack,
A half-eaten apple,
An old paper sack,

A crumbled piece
Of yesterday's STAR
I'll find you, you fiend!
Wherever you are!

And when I do,
For your reward,
I'll put the whole mess
In YOUR front yard!

THE FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

The Foggy Bottom News is published monthly September through June by the Foggy Bottom Restoration Association and distributed free to members. Charley Rogers, Editor, 917 Hughes Ct.

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SCHOOL PLAY

The children of Briggs-Montgomery School gave a delightful program, which they called "A Pageant of Far East Art, Music, and Dance," in the school auditorium Wednesday evening, April 2.

Special scenery for the pageant was designed and painted by Paul Mason and Marian Gallagher. Mrs. Mary H. McKay, Principal of the school, sponsored the program, lending the use of the auditorium and excusing pupils for rehearsals.

The show was written and directed by Mrs. Sarah Ann Davies, who spent many years as a teacher in Thailand (Siam). Pupils who performed, and the parts they played, are as follows:

Deborah McDaniels	- Dancer
Louis Cooke	- Dragon
Joseph Wright	- Dragon
Nathaniel Jackson	- Coconut Tree
John Butcher	- Coconut Tree
Eddie Martin	- Coconut Tree
Elaine Johnson	- Lotus Flower
Jo Anne Wheeler	- Lotus Flower
Pamela Broughton	- Lotus Flower
Michael McDaniels	- Fisher Boy
Clifton Rose	- Cat
Bernice Cosey	- Cat
Albert Harris	- Monkey
Ricardo Terry	- Monkey
Frances Waugh	- Lotus Blossom
Michael Thomas)
Patricia Little)
Bobby Dunston)
Joan Garner)
Gail Campbell)-Rhythmic Flag
Ella Joe)- Bearers
Marguerite Wheeler)
Lloyd Lomax)
Arnette Jefferson)
Carl Ford	- Dan
George Beavers	- A Farmer
Daniel Dunston	- A Coolie
Kenneth Jackson	- A Guard
Melvin Chance	- Tee
Francine Thompson	- Manee
David Dunston	- A Coolie

Francine Christian	- A Fan Dancer
Barbara Milton	- Sopa
Cassandra Jefferson	- Sandra
Essie Wright	- Classical Dance
Melvorn Nichols	- Princess of the Lotus Flowers -(dance)
Charmaine Mason	- Rain Dancer
Shelia McClintock	- Scarf Dancer
Roberta Lomax	- Scarf Dancer
Gloria Brockenberry	- Scarf Dancer

* * *

At Lisner Auditorium This Month

April 14, 15, 17 -- Opera Society of Washington presents "Cosi fan Tutte" at 8:30 p.m. Tickets -\$2, \$3, \$4, \$4.50, \$6, \$8
 April 25-26 --University Modern Dance Concert at 8:30 p.m. Tickets -\$1, \$1.25
 April 29 --The Institute of Contemporary Arts presents Arnold Toynbee at 8:30 p.m. Tickets -\$2.50. A limited number to be on sale April 29 only.

* * *



THE PROSTOVS HAVE A GRANDSON

Bob and Lydia Owens of Los Angeles sent Foggy Bottom friends an announcement of the birth of a baby boy on March 15. The new baby, Lydia's third, is named Robert Eugene, for his father and maternal grandfather. Lydia is the daughter of Gene and Billie Prostov, who lived at 2614 I St. until last fall, when they moved to Foxhall Village. Lydia's first two children are girls.

SCHOOL PATROL

A special distinction at Briggs-Montgomery School is to be named a member of the school patrol. Pupils who now hold this distinction are:

Gregory Magruder	-Captain	948 26th St.
David Dunston	-First Lieut.	2319 E St.
Carl Howard	-Second Lieut.	942 26th St.
Alfred Fortune		1117 New Hampshire Ave.
George Beavers		1030 25th St.
Roland Lomax		821 25th St.
Arthur Harris		2400 I St.
Timothy Whitney		1002 26th St.
Lloyd Davis		2433 H St.
Willard Shorter		942 26th St.
Lawrence Riley		528 24th St.
Carl Ford		2608 K St.
David Lynch		542 24th St.

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FOGHORN SOUNDS OFF

Our friends, the owners of Potomac Plaza Apartments, have started their own paper -- THE FOGHORN. Editor Jean Dupont Miller and her helper, Fred Othman, in the first issue dated April 1958, "hasten to point out that they did not seek the appointments, but will try to do the best possible job."

For the most part The Foghorn is devoted strictly to housekeeping matters of interest to Plaza owners only. But of general interest to people of our neighborhood are two pieces, one a chatty account of our gashouse period, the other a note about the progress of the AAUW building in back of the apartments. Originally the AAUW site was intended for a cooperative office building for doctors, but not enough doctors cooperated to put through the project.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find these two stories under other headings and with appropriate credit to our Foggy Bottom contemporary.

OBITUARY

Robert Richard (Dick) Burrell died Saturday, April 5, at his residence, 2421 I St. Dick was the son of the late Joseph and Emma Burrell, brother of Mrs. Nora Drew, Mrs. Folson, Mrs. Elizabeth Conley, Mrs. E.B. Seliman and John T. Burrell. He leaves a host of relatives and friends. The funeral was held Tuesday, April 8, from Liberty Baptist Church, 817 23rd St., the Rev. Wilmore A. Carter officiating. Dick was buried in Harmony Cemetery.

AAUW BUILDING

The rigs drilling holes in the earth near the corner of 24th and G streets aren't seeking oil. They're testing the soil for the foundations of the forthcoming headquarters of the American Association of University Women. Construction of this \$2,000,000 building will start late this summer and it should be finished some 15 months later. Then the mud on that side of the Potomac Plaza will disappear, to be replaced by flower gardens. The University Women are planning a truly handsome structure, which will blend perfectly with our own architecture. It is expected to contain a restaurant and other club facilities; many an owner's wife probably will join so that she may take her husband out to dinner by strolling him exactly one half block.

-- The Foghorn

FOGGY BOTTOM STATE PAPER

One of our Capital savants remarked the other day, apropos of the plan to locate all of the State Department's many branches in our midst: "Who knows? Some day a treaty may come out of the Department that will go down in history as 'The Pact of Foggy Bottom.'"

QUAINT NAMES

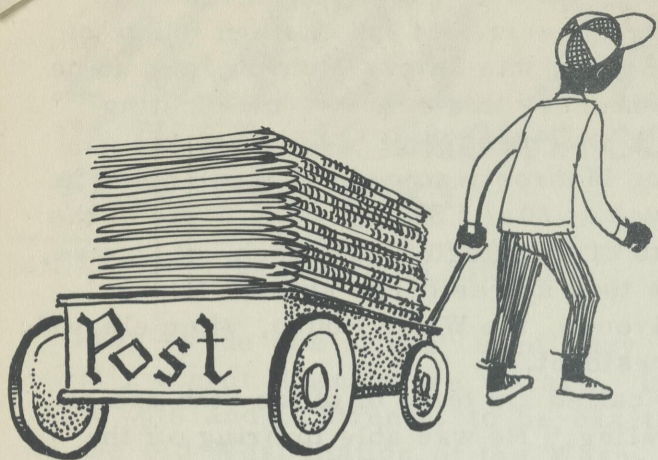
Foggy Bottom is only one of several Washington neighborhoods with folknames. The Government Printing Office area used to be known as "Swampoodle," and other sections were "Cow Town," "Hell's Bottom," "Holy Hill," and "Bloodfield." Quaint names of some of the alleys in the District were "Goat," "Chow," "Pork-steak," and "Tilly Tinkins."

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POST CARRIER BOY

Calvin Monroe, carrier boy for the Washington Post and Times Herald, stopped in for a cup of coffee with us one Sunday morning not long ago and chatted about his job, his school, and his impressive ambitions.

Every weekday morning Calvin delivers 200 papers, and on Sunday 225. His route includes Foggy Bottom homes along I Street from 23rd to the river and the blocks on the cross streets from H to K. also Snow's, Hughes, and Green's Courts. He starts out around 4 a.m. and usually finishes by 6. Then he eats a hearty breakfast at home (2131 N Street), which his mother prepares before she leaves for her job as nursing assistant at the D. C. Village near St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

Calvin is 15 and the eldest of 6 children. He attends Francis Junior High, likes music and physical education, plays on the school basketball team that tied with Gordon Junior High for the league championship this season, and intends to try out for the 100-yd. dash in track this spring. He wants to attend college and study business administration or electrical engineering--probably the former, for he admits he's a bit weak in mathematics.

His paper route yields \$75 a month on the average, including tips. Men tip best, says Calvin, and he receives as much as \$2 from the most generous around Christmas time, but "a lady on New Hampshire" tipped him a dollar when he delivered her paper practically on schedule that worst day of the February blizzard.

Calvin's folks come from around Fredericksburg, Virginia, where Monroes are nearly as numerous as Joneses around Jonesboro. Could be that one of Calvin's long forgotten forebears delivered legal papers for a young man named James Monroe, who was starting out in the practice of law in historic Fredericksburg all of 175 years ago, and was destined to be our fifth President and author of the Monroe Doctrine.

First view of coloring on campus this spring, as always, is the "Way of the Forsythia," on 20th Street between G and H. The Sidwells gave the forsythia bushes to the university in the 30's, when Sidwell Friends School was moved from I Street at the site of Doctor's Hospital to Wisconsin Avenue. Iris will follow forsythia, and then will come the roses--more than 100 varieties of them.

Our 30-year-old rose gardens replaced concrete slab between Stockton Hall, the gymnasium, and Corcoran Hall. Mrs. Joshua Evans Jr., journalist, civic leader, university trustee, and alumna, talked with the late Abram Lisner, also a trustee, then owner of the Palais Royale Department Store, destined to become Woodward and Lothrop's North Building. Mr. Lisner contributed \$200 which made it possible to break up the concrete yard and put in shrubs and lawns.

Then the university and the Potomac Rose Society started an experimental garden to develop new varieties in a plot behind the G Street fire house. It was here that a new fireman one day reported to his chief that a man was stealing roses. The man was Cloyd H. Marvin, G.W.'s president, inspecting our garden. Actually, it was President Marvin himself who sparked the development of the university's gardens.

The Rose Society and the university jointly sponsored institutes for many years. They considered the merits and demerits of new and rare species. Mrs. Lillian Smith, chairman of the 20th Century Club garden committee, became the university garden consultant.

Remembrance of those days are recalled along H Street between 20th and 21st, where National Flower Guild red roses were planted as a gift of the Starr Nursery, and behind Woodhull house at 21st and G Streets, where Jackson Perkins gift roses bloom pink and red. Old fashioned roses contributed by

(continued on next page)



friends bloom back of the president's office near 20th and G Street. The largest bed, south of Lisner Auditorium, has 220 bushes and 25 species.

First rose to bloom on campus every season is a yellow climber, usually at its height on Mother's Day, on the wall by University Bookstore.

FOGGY BOTTOM ART AT G W

A former resident of East Foggy Bottom-2115 F St.-will exhibit photographs in a one-man show in the George Washington University Library art museum during May. The photographer-artist is Don Collander who is employed as a writer in the Office of public relations at G. W.

Don's photographs will include Washington scenes, some informal portraiture, and many shots of his son Bruce, known to Don's friends as his best and cheapest model. Blond, blue-eyed Bruce was born in Foggy Bottom.

One floor of the May show at GW will consist of prints and print processes by Chester Leich. A series of exhibits prepared by Chester will demonstrate how full color prints are made of paintings.

Going on now is the annual show of the University Art Club. This is a competition in oils, watercolors, pastel, graphics, or sculpture. The competition is open to students of GW and affiliated Corcoran School of Art. Included in the exhibit are several scenes familiar to Foggy Bottom homeowners. The April show will be up till May 2.

PRETTY MODELS FOR SKETCH CLASS

"The models are pretty and varied" who are engaged for the Sketch Group of the Arts Club of Washington, according an announcement in Artifacts, Arts Club paper. Outsiders may attend and take advantage of this opportunity to work without criticism, with no obligation to sign up beyond the one evening they appear.

The group meets every Tuesday evening from 8 to 10. There is a separate entrance for nonmembers of the Club. Mrs. Casgrain, chairman, says the sketch group "is intent, works with real ability--and there is a nice friendly feeling." The fee is 75 cents an evening.

BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JAMES MONROE

A former denizen of the eastern fringe of Foggy Bottom was James Monroe, and some of his admirers this year are celebrating the 200th anniversary of his birth.

During Monroe's sojourn in Washington he first lived at 2017 I St., now the home of the Arts Club of Washington, and then, of course, later he took up residence at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the White House, when elected fifth President.

They called his term of office "the era of good feeling." He was able to bring off the acquisition of Florida (1819), the Missouri Compromise (1820), the Monroe Doctrine (1823), and the charter of Columbian College, now G W (1821).

At the Arts Club a Monroe Exhibit will open with a tea on Sunday April 27, and a birthday dinner and party are scheduled by the Club for Monday, April 28.

NEW RATES FOR PLAZA OWNERS

Owing to miscalculation in cost of operation of air conditioning, increases in tax rates, and the inflation, the Corporation of Potomac Plaza Apartments announced last month that future monthly assessments on owners for operation and maintenance will be upped about 25 percent to cover these charges. The new rates will mean an increase of about \$7 a month--from about \$25 to \$32--for the smallest units, on up proportionally for larger holdings.

BANKING'S IN THE BLOOD

Tom McLachlen, manager of Foggy Bottom's branch of the McLachlen Banking Corporation, represents the third generation of his family in the banking business. He is the grandson of the bank's founder, Archibald Malcolm McLachlen. Our branch of the bank is housed in Potomac Plaza Apartments, and Tom's office looks out across Virginia Ave. to the river and the green hills beyond. On the north wall behind Tom's desk is a large mural depicting the Foggy Bottom river front as it appeared from this spot 100 years ago. Through the bank's plate glass windows facing south and west he can survey the scene as it looks today while day by day he watches the Foggy Bottom business district develop across the avenue.

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MILESTONE IN BOTTOM HISTORY

"Down by de gas works" until very recently meant down where we are. It meant 26th and G Streets, to be exact, and the old West Station of the Washington Gas Light Company. When the Station was built, a little over one hundred years ago, Jenny Lind was the toast of the town. In a memorable concert a little earlier in the decade the great Daniel Webster had risen and bowed to her. The Evening Star had printed its first issue. The famous Cabin John Bridge was being built. E.D. Willard, proprietor of the National Hotel, daringly installed the first gas cooking stove in his establishment.

The Washington Gas Light Co. was chartered in a bill passed by the Thirtieth Congress in 1848, the first gas company to be incorporated by Congress. The company grew along with the Capital, in many ways pioneered the use of gas in the country. By the end of the company's first year mains had been laid and lamp posts and lanterns erected. On December 29, 1848 the President's House was lit with gas to the great satisfaction of President Polk and the Commissioner of Public Buildings.

At first, only Government buildings had the innovation. Then business houses and hotels were illuminated. Finally, the individual householder was granted the modern boon and citizens installed beautifully decorated lamps just outside their front doors. The company admonished citizens against letting their wet meters and pipes freeze during the winter. Advised a circular issued in 1858: "The cheapest way to prevent the wet meter from freezing is to fill it with whiskey. . . . in any case where it may be desired, the Company will fill the meter free of expense, the gas consumer furnishing the whiskey."

When the West Station was built large barges brought coal up the Potomac and unloaded their cargoes at the wharves of the Station. During the Civil War it was impossible to bring coal up by water, and almost impossible by rail. Yet gas was vital, not only to light the city, but for the Executive Mansion and the various government departments which kept going around the clock. Three months before Lee's surrender at Appomattox, President Lincoln appealed to the president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad:

"It is said we shall soon all be in the dark here, unless you can bring coal to make gas. I suppose you would do this, without my interference, if you could; and I only write you to say it is very important to us Do all you can for us"

The coal was brought, and the West Station kept going. Much later, the Company acquired Analostan Island in the river, with the idea of eventually putting another gas manufacturing plant there. But the plan was never carried out. The use of electricity for illumination was making strides. Sometime around 1930, the Company sold the island to the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Association and the name was changed to Roosevelt Island.

The gas tank which marked the West Station was large and black and ugly in contrast to the slender white shaft of the Washington Monument not far distant. Yet in its way it was a monument, too-- a monument to the enterprise and initiative of the men who helped make Washington a modern city. And when the tank was demolished, not long ago, to make way for the Potomac Plaza Development, that too, was a milestone in the city's history.

-- The Foghorn

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